

PRAYER PERSPECTIVE

HOW GRACE CHANGES OUR VIEW ON PRAYER

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

~ 2 Corinthians 9:15

1. Prayer Requests

- a. It's normal not to know how to pray. It's normal to saturate prayer with requests.
- b. Praying what's on our mind includes worries, cares, needs, plans, frustrations, griefs
- c. We are taught to, "Take it to the Lord in prayer" (in hymnals, but not Bibles) – Phil 4:6
- d. Prayer turns into a room service request, suggestion box, or a complaint hotline to God.
- e. Feedback on prayer: "it doesn't work", "I tried", "I don't see how it helps"
- f. Prayer can frustrate people, particularly when their requests are not granted.

2. Getting Prayers 'Answered'

- a. Learning to pray becomes an exercise in how to get what we ask for.
- b. Beg, big, groups, find a righteous man (Jam 5:16), tithe, do church things.
- c. David prays, "*Hear my prayer, O God*" and "*answer me*" - Psa 54:2, 143:1
- d. Survey: 87% say 1+ prayer answered in past 12mo, God hears no matter belief (84%)
- e. God said he won't hear some prayers – 1 Pet 3:7,12, Jer 7:16, Mic 3:4, Jam 1:6-7
- f. Then, Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you" - Luke 11:9, Matt 21:22
- g. How can this be when "we don't know what to pray for" - Rom 8:26
- h. What is God doing? Is he going to help? Does he care? Am I doing it wrong?
- i. What kind of "friend" is Jesus if he does everything we demand request?
- j. Why is getting our prayers answered the goal? Our perspective needs changed.

3. Changed Perspective Changes Prayer

- a. When God speaks it should change our perspective. God has spoken. Heb 1:1-2
- b. Book of common prayer: "Christian prayer is response to God" (you answer God)
- c. Praying Job's prayer "why?!" now would be to not listen to what God has said.
- d. We pray to our Creator, life giver, Saviour: not a divine butler - 1 Tim 1:17, 6:15
- e. Some prayers do not require an answer: thanks, praise, reflection - Rom 11:33-36
- f. Most requests do not get answered... and that is good (God is good) – Jam 4:3
- g. Before saved our minds were reprobate, vain, greedy - Rom 1:28, 2Co 13:5, Eph 4:18
- h. What if we don't need a change of situation, but a change of mind - Rom 1:21-22
- i. We are soldiers, servants, stewards, speaking to the general: we don't set the agenda.
- j. We need to learn to change our perspective - Phi 4:1-8, 11-13

4. Prayer Under Grace

- a. God is able to do above all that we ask or think – Eph 3:20
- b. What if he has given us more than we know to ask? Rom 5:8, 2 Cor 9:15, Eph 3:8
- c. God has given his abundant grace and manifold wisdom – Eph 1:11, 3:2, 10
- d. Asking to get is normal when we don't know what we have or are under a covenant.
- e. Under grace we are given much freely in Christ. This should affect our prayer.
- f. Make your requests to God "with thanksgiving" for what he has done - Phi 4:7, Col 4:2
- g. God wills we pray to give (glory, praise, thanks, toward others) – 1 Thess 5:17-18
- h. Worries? Frustrations? Fears? Who is sufficient? God's grace. Rom 8:31-32, 2 Tim 1:7
- i. If you struggle giving thanks, a good prayer might be, "Lord, change my perspective."